

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I am very impressed with the survey of fire models which Dr. Friedman reported in Vol. 4, No. 3 of the *Journal of Fire Protection Engineering*. This required extensive searching from numerous sources around the globe, and his comprehensive compilation deserves to be complimented.

There is one aspect of this survey, however, which I fear can mistakenly create an over-optimistic impression on potential users. A model has no utility to a user if it is not **available** to him. Even from the point of view of the profession in general, very serious doubts must exist about models which are not available for inspection by others. How can we simply take the author's word that the code does what is claimed and does it correctly? When we deal with laboratory experiments, we expect the authors to describe the apparatus well enough so that another laboratory can buy or build identical hardware and confirm or negate the original findings. Surely results of numerical computation deserve equal scrutiny. Surely, also, a short description of the basic physics encoded in a model is absolutely no substitute for either running the model yourself, or checking the code line-by-line, or, preferably, both.

Thus, I hope that if Dr. Friedman is willing in the future to issue an updated version of his

survey, that models be not listed in the main tabulation if they cannot be obtained by the general user. A similar concern needs to be expressed if models are, in principle, available, but are priced so as to effectively keep them out of useful service in our professional community.

For the first point, the models must be available to anyone who sends in a check to the author. Restrictions requiring that the user share his results with the developer, do the work on-site at author's institution, or similar encumbrances all should be taken to mean the model is not available to the public.

For the second point, not everyone's resources are identical and there can, certainly, be discussion as to whether the pricing is within reach or not. It would be very appropriate, however, if "Price" would be a column heading in such a tabulation. This would let the user clearly distinguish for himself which models are affordable and which are beyond the pale. Certainly no models should be accepted for listing if the price is only determined upon negotiation with the buyer.

Sincerely,
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